

AGROFORESTRY IN THE RURAL DEVELOPMENT CAP: PILLAR II

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Introduction

Rural development or environment is promoted by the Pillar II of the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Pillar II of the CAP is composed a complex network of Rural Development Programs (RDP) that went from 88 in the period 2007-2013 to over one hundred programs in the CAP 2014-2020. They can be defined at country or regional level and are composed by a set of measures that are cofounded by the member states (MS) and the European Commission (EC), going from 50% to 85% of payments from the European Commission. RDP represents around the 20% of CAP expenditures. It is structured in different axes that not only deal with land management, but also with the improvement of the well-being of rural population and markets. When a new period is established, MS activate measures, but unfortunately it does not mean that there will be a call on that measure or that a real implementation will be carried out. Opposite to Pillar I, it also involves forestlands. This paper aims at summarizing the main measures of the RDP linked to Agroforestry (AF) in Europe. In this report, we will make an analysis of the results of the most important measures linked to AF within the CAP 2007-2013, which will allow us to understand better the historical measures and link them with measures carried out within CAP 2014-2020.

Rural Development Programs

CAP Pillar 2 - "Rural Development" - is a common policy with strategic objectives set at the EU level to deliver a more sustainable agriculture that appeared when Agenda 21 was agreed on. Most of the CAP 2014-2020 programs have been approved during the year 2015, so they are not implemented yet. To carry out this evaluation we have read the 88 RDP implemented in Europe and organize them based on the activities they finance that are linked to AF practices. The selected activities are those associated to forest farming AF practices (apiculture), increase of woody vegetation across Europe (forest strips and small stands, hedgerows, isolated trees), those dealing with multipurpose trees (orchards) and finally those related to silvopasture (forest understory grazing and mountain silvopastoralism). From the analysis carried out in the CAP 2007-2013, it is not easy to identify a unique measure of the RDP associated to any of these AF activities. On the contrary, each activity is promoted depending on the RDP by different measures, and even by several measures within the same RDP. There are countries that activate few (i.e. Ireland with 12) but others a high number of measures (e.g. France with 48). This makes it difficult to analyze the measures of RDP linked to the promotion of AF practices.

CAP 2007-2013 AF measures

AF promotion is mostly linked to most important Axis from a budget point of view, the Axis 2 dealing with environment that represents 45% of the total RDP budget, even though some activities related with the improvement of life in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy are in some cases related with the products delivered from those AF practices already mentioned. Axis II is divided in two parts "sustainable use of agricultural lands" and "sustainable use of forestry lands". The most popular measures of the second axis was the measure 214 (Agri-Environmental payments, 24%), 212 ("payments to farmers in areas with handicaps other than mountain areas") (6.9%) and 211 ("natural handicap payments other than mountain areas") (6.9%) After reading the RDP we found that it is very difficult to make an analysis focused on the measures, so we have made a selection of measures linked to those activities associated to AF practices like apiculture (forest farming), promotion of forest strips and small stands, hedgerows, isolated trees (silvoarable), orchards (multipurpose trees) and forest understory grazing and mountain silvopastoralism (silvopasture) that can be seen in **Figure 1**. European Union is the second largest producer of honey in the world, with almost 14 million hives across Europe, and bee keeping is promoted across Europe by national programs, but also by Pillar II (**Figure 1**). Apiculture is the main funded forest farming activity under RDP. It is promoted through 10 different measures, among which the most popular are measures 121 and 214 (17 RDP) but also 215, 216 and 221. The rest of the measures that can be linked to AF

have less measures involved and are mainly connected to those activities that already exist in the areas, without a real extension to other areas (i.e. hedgerows). Most of them are linked to the 214 measure. Even though there was a Measure 222, allocated to the establishment of AF, it was not very successful, with the exception of Hungary, which can be explained by the fact that AF practices are not really known, understood and identified by the EU Commission and the MS.

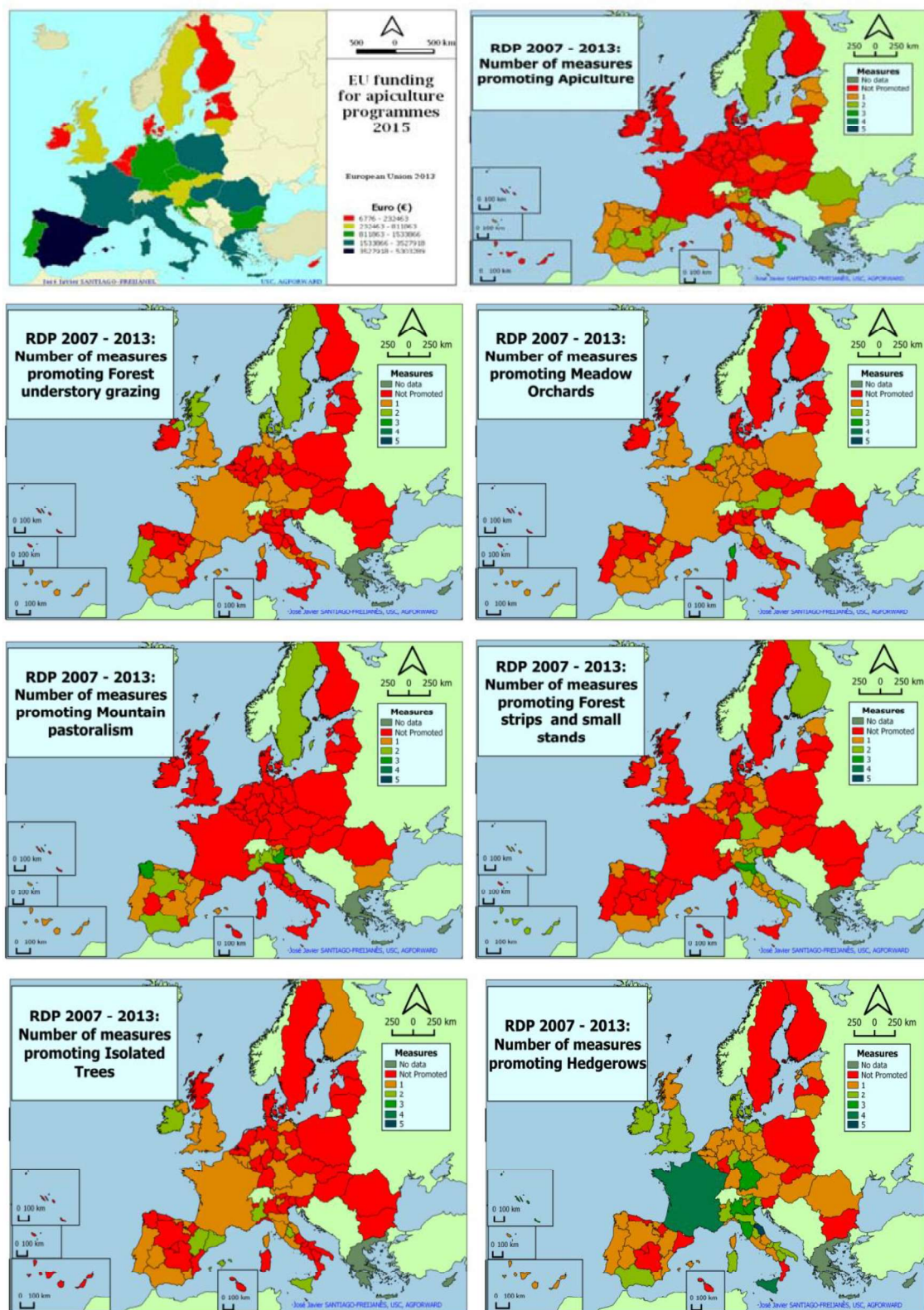


Figure 1: Maps of the number of measures promoting different activities linked to agroforestry in Europe. Colors range from red (no measure open in the country for this activity) to dark green (5 measures). Gray means that no data is available for that country.

CAP 2014-2020 AF measures

Within the period 2014-2020, most of measures are similar to the previous period, but, there is a lack of knowledge about the ones that will be really implemented, as they were fully approved in December 2015. For example measure 222 was proposed by over 10 countries in 2007, but really implemented in only two (Hungary and France) in 2009.

The new CAP 2014-2020 offers a unique framework to promote AF through innovation. The EU is aware of the huge gap between knowledge and implementation and created the European Innovation Partnership within the RDP as a horizontal approach. A huge amount of money has been allocated to different networking activities where farmers can discuss about sustainable practices and where AF will play an important role. They are called operational groups. But also, the commission supports the creation of transnational Focus Groups where researchers through a farmer driven structure discuss about specific subjects to be promoted within the operational groups. EURAF has been able to promote the Agroforestry focus groups.

Conclusion

Pillar II involves several activities related to AF practices, however they are not properly identified as such. The evaluation of the impact of these measures is complex as the same activity is funded by different measures in different countries. Increasing AF awareness and making possible knowledge transfer is essential to promote AF practices in Europe and both operational groups and focus groups, within the EIP-agri, can be specifically used for this purpose.